

VZCZCXRO3545  
RR RUEHBW  
DE RUEHBW #0230 0730808  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 130808Z MAR 08  
FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0037  
INFO RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE 0060

UNCLAS BELGRADE 000230

SIPDIS

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FOR OBO/PM/FIR, OBO/OM/SHEM, DS/CR/SI

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ABLD](#) [AMGT](#) [ASEC](#) [OFDP](#) [KSAF](#) [SR](#)

SUBJECT: FEB 21 FIRE IN AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

¶1. (U) A fire occurred in unoccupied Chancery space at around 19:10 P.M. on Feb. 21, 2008 as a result of riot on same evening.

¶2. (SBU) Fire occurred in X01002, Non Occupied Chancery Building. Damage occurred in the following areas: ceiling wooden construction, doors and door frames, wooden stairs, windows and window frames and wooden flooring were burned out. The total estimate of loss for fire damage is at least \$100,000 dollars.

¶3. (SBU) One death occurred as a result of the fire. One of the rioters, a young Serbian national named Zoran Vujovic, died as a result of injuries sustained in the blaze.

¶4. (SBU) Fire occurred in a non occupied building. Facilities and General Services operations were interrupted to assess and repair damage. Normal operations of these sections may be interrupted for at least 4 weeks until damage repairs and security upgrades are completed. Several tradesmen and leadership of GSO and Facilities sections must devote at least quarter of working time to oversee necessary repairs for three to four weeks.

¶5. (SBU) Fire was started by rioters. Exact cause of ignition of fire is not known at this point. Most likely causes are rioters who broke into building and started the fire with a road flare or a flare and/or a molotov cocktail thrown in from street. Embassy is still waiting for official report from Fire Department and Police. Embassy has been informed that the only way to retrieve a copy of fire report is to send a diplomatic note to MFA officially requesting such report.

¶6. (SBU) Local fire brigade extinguished fire after one and half hours. Fire department response was slow and access to property was delayed until at least 19:44 due to riot. Evidence shows that police protection was withdrawn from around the building several minutes before the rioters arrived. Police finally provided access for fire brigade around 19:44, breaking up the violence several minutes after the rioters had effectively started the fire and damaged the building.

MUNTER